

Board of Chiropractic Examiners

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CA Relay Service TT/TDD (800) 735-2929
Consumer Complaint Hotline (866) 543-1311
www.chiro.ca.gov



Consumer Complaints And How they are Processed

The Chiropractic Board was created to protect consumers through licensing and enforcement functions. The Board has the authority to require that licensees abide by provisions of the Chiropractic Initiative Act, Business and Professions Code, and regulations relating to the practice of chiropractic found in the California Code of Regulations. Since the law does not give the Board statutory authority to establish an inspection program, most Board actions result from written complaints regarding violations by specific doctors.

Complaint Process

When a complaint is received:

- A file is created and assigned a case number; all pertinent data is entered into a computerized tracking system, and an acknowledgment is mailed to the complainant.
- Complaint information is confidential; however, in some cases the licensee may be advised of a complainant's specific concerns and asked to respond.
- If the allegations are serious, or a number of similar complaints have been received, an investigation is initiated.
- If the results of the investigation confirm the allegations of illegal activity, the investigation report is forwarded to the State Attorney General's Office with a request to initiate legal proceedings intended to result in formal disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Action

There are many degrees of effective disciplinary action that the Board may impose. Informal action may consist of interviews and counseling with a focus on education. In some cases, the doctor may voluntarily surrender his/her license. Formal disciplinary action may result in revocation of the license, suspension of practice, or a probationary period with specific restrictions. **Only formal disciplinary or criminal action is public record.**

Complaints the Board Can Handle

Filing a detailed written complaint is the first step in the Board's regulatory process. An allegation of patient injury during a chiropractic manipulation, is an example of extreme departure from the standard of care, and, if proven, would be a violation of the law.

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Other examples of violations of law include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sexual misconduct.
- Conviction of a criminal offense related to the profession.
- Any practice outside the scope of the doctor of chiropractic license or below accepted professional standards.
- Deceptive or misleading advertising.
- Unlicensed practice.
- Insurance fraud

Other Complaints

Allegations that are not within the Board's authority include:

- Fee or billing disputes
- General business practices
- Personality conflicts

Fee and billing disputes should be filed through an attorney in small claims court, or with the Better Business Bureau. If the doctor is an association member, complaints regarding unethical behavior may be referred to the California Chiropractic Association:

California Chiropractic Association
1600 Sacramento Inn Way, Suite 106
Sacramento, CA 95815-3458
916-648-2727

If you have a complaint that is not within the Board's jurisdiction and are not sure which agency to contact, the Department of Consumer Affairs will accept and refer complaints for you:

Department of Consumer Affairs
Consumer Assistance Office
400 R Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-445-1254

How Long Does it Take to Process a Complaint

All complaints are carefully evaluated and, thus, may take an extended period of time to investigate to determine if disciplinary action is appropriate. Complainants are always notified of any action taken by the Board.

Remember any action taken by the Board has no impact on civil remedies that may be available to complainants. Options for civil recourse include, but are not limited to, retention of legal counsel, small claims court, arbitration, and professional association assistance.

If there is any question regarding care rendered by a chiropractor, the Board encourages each consumer to file a formal complaint. If you have questions or need additional information, please write or call the Board office.